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A NEW CRICKET FROG (*ACRIS*) FROM THE MIDDLE
WESTERN STATES

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The Cricket Frog of the Interior Plains and Interior Highlands¹ of the United States seems to be amply entitled to recognition as a distinct subspecies.

Acris gryllus blanchardi, subsp. nov.

Western Cricket Frog; Blanchard's Cricket Frog

Type.—Carnegie Museum, No. 26,607; adult male; meadow near Smallen's Cave, Ozark, Christian County, Missouri; collected June 9, 1938, by Charles E. Mohr.

Subspecific characters.—Distinguished from the nearest geographical representative, *A. g. crepitans* Baird, by slightly greater linear measurements, by decidedly greater bulk, by somewhat more extensive webbing of the toes, and by the more extensive dusky area on the posterior face of the femora in the vicinity of the vent.

Description of type.—A few slight dermal tubercles on head, back, and hind limbs; outline of snout from below somewhat rounded, as in *A. g. crepitans*, not pointed, as in *A. g. gryllus* (Le Conte); tympanum small and indistinct; fingers not webbed; toes well webbed, the webbing extending to the proximal portion of the penultimate phalanx of the fourth toe; third toe extending past middle of antepenultimate phalanx of the fourth toe; two conspicuous metatarsal tubercles, unpigmented, the inner twice the size of the outer; pectoral fold present; areolae on chest and abdomen.

General color of upper parts (in preserved specimen) slaty gray; a triangular interorbital spot somewhat darker, its posterior apex not sharply pointed; upper labial region also darker, with four light vertical bars on each side; an oblique light line from eye to arm insertion, bordered behind by a small triangular dark patch; an oblique dark stripe extending from above axilla nearly to groin; several indistinct dark patches on lower back, two of them paired; no median light line over urostyle; dorsal surface of femur with about three dark transverse elliptical bars, the middle one darkest; tibia, tarsus, toes, and arms with dusky spots or bars above; a dark brown stripe on posterior surface of femur, bordered on each side (except in vicinity of vent) by a straw-colored area; a pair of conspicuous whitish papillae below the vent; numerous similar but smaller papillae on adjoining portions of the femora, those on the posterior surface conspicuous against

¹Fenneman, Map of the Physical Divisions of the United States. U. S. Geological Survey, 1930.

dusky interspaces, but those on the ventral surface inconspicuous on a pale ground color; lower lip dusky, variegated with light markings; a dusky stripe from angle of mouth to front of arm insertion; throat dusky, lighter posteriorly; chest, abdomen, ventral surface of femur and tibia, and inner surface of tarsus creamy or straw-colored, practically immaculate; webs variegated with dusky.

Measurements.—The measurements of the type and of two adult male topotypes—all collected on the same day—are: length (snout to vent), 26, 26, 25 mm.; intergenual extent, 28.5, 27, 26; tibia, 16, 15, 15; whole hind foot, 21.5, 19, 19; weight (preserved), 2.2, 1.9, 1.6 grams.

The average measurements of five adult males and of ten adult females from Tulsa County, Oklahoma, are, respectively: length, 24.1, 29.2; intergenual extent, 25.4, 30.3; tibia, 14.4, 17; whole hind foot, 18.7, 22.3; weight (preserved), 1.3, 2.2 grams. The average weight of *blanchardi* is practically double that of *crepitans*.

Distribution.—Chiefly the Interior Plains and Interior Highlands of the United States; north to the southern parts of Wisconsin, Minnesota, and South Dakota; east to southwestern Michigan, northwestern Indiana, Illinois, southeastern Missouri, and northeastern Arkansas; south to southwestern Texas; and west to central Nebraska, eastern Colorado, and southeastern Arizona.

Remarks.—The extensive list of specimens examined is reserved for later publication.

In general, the dorsal color pattern seems to be less distinct in *blanchardi* than in *crepitans*. In the former, the somewhat extensive dusky area on the posterior surface of the femora in the vicinity of the vent, filling up the interspaces between the whitish papillae, is generally contiguous with the dark brown or dusky lengthwise stripe just above this area. In *crepitans*, on the other hand, this stripe is generally bordered by a light area on both sides throughout its length except just above the vent. Herein lies one of the principal differences in color pattern between *blanchardi* and *crepitans*.

Presumably intergradation between these two subspecies takes place along their entire line of contact from Michigan to the Rio Grande. Intermediate specimens have been noted from various localities in Missouri and Texas along the inner edge of the Coastal Plain.

The place filled by Frank Nelson Blanchard (1888-1937) in the recent annals of American herpetology was fairly unique. His complete sincerity, his altogether unselfish devotion to his favorite science, to his students, and to his colleagues, together with his high standards of scholarship, set him far apart from the average of humanity. It is a privilege to pay a slight tribute to the memory of such a friend in the naming of this little amphibian, with which he had become acquainted beside the prairie waters of Iowa.

The type specimen has been generously donated by Charles E. Mohr to the Carnegie Museum.

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